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Borough of Louth



Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR

The Year 1955

T. E. WIGGEN AND SON LTD.,
THE PRINTERIES
LOUTH

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BOROUGH OF LOUTH

1955—6

Chairman of the Council :

MAYOR

Alderman A. E. Maxey, J.P.

DEPUTY MAYOR

Alderman W. R. BURR

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Chairman :

Councillor L. C. Pell

Vice-Chairman :

Alderman W. R. Burr

Alderman T. Freer

Councillor Miss A. E. Hardy

Alderman E. W. Macdonald

Councillor F. R. Macdonald

Councillor J. H. Annall

Councillor R. Morton

Councillor R. M. Cross

Councillor W. Patchett

HOUSING AND SLUM CLEARANCE COMMITTEE

Chairman :

Alderman J. H. Starsmore

Vice-Chairman :

Councillor Miss A. E. Hardy

Councillor J. H. Annall

Councillor P. J. T. Haxby

Councillor W. A. Dann

Councillor F. R. Macdonald

Councillor C. W. Dunham

Councillor R. Morton

Councillor B. G. Gibson

Councillor R. Wilkinson

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Louth.

I have the honour to present my annual report on the health and the environment services of the Borough for 1955, prepared according to statutory requirements

The vital statistics for the year, in plain figures, showed that of the resident population, there were 191 live births against 144 deaths ; still births numbered 10, and 4 babies died within the first year of life. When these figures are converted into " rates," we learn that the local birth rate was the highest for the past five years but the death rate was not so low as the previous year, which, however, provided a local record. Both these local rates were better than the corresponding ones for the country as a whole.

The one blot on an otherwise satisfactory picture came from the very high still birth rate which was somewhat more than double the national figure, but in a small population, erratic yearly variations are not unusual for this, and a truer assessment is found from the average over the immediate five year period. By this reckoning, our local still birth rate is found to keep pace with the national advance. This method of comparison applies equally to the infant death rate, which, for the year, was very much superior to the national return.

However dull and indigestible statistics may be, it is instructive once in a way to consider their importance, because they supply the one reliable means of measuring the progress of community health, to which the Council contributes its important if modest share. The victories of social or preventive medicine are never spectacular, as their merit becomes so often overlooked in the gradualism of the change, but one could quote at length about the striking reduction of the general and particular mortality rates and the lowered incidence, or complete wipe out, of certain diseases by planned attack over the years against the agents known to be inimical to healthy living. Within the general frame work, our Council furnishes its quota to disease prevention and the promotion of health, and if the results of endeavours cannot be set out in a yearly form of balance sheet, showing health returns for outlay, they are apparent at least in the health of the young population examined at the school medical inspections. The Council provisions these days go far beyond giving attentions to matters of sanitation. A safe milk supply shares in importance with a pure water supply, and clean food and good housing conditions are major issues in the strive for community healthiness. To this end, we are bound to think of the opportunity provided by recent legislation to clear slum property and raise the standard of food hygiene, and may our efforts be not found lacking in the worthiness of the aim,

Other matters in the report, concerned with disease and death, called for little critical comment, and continue to be most satisfactory. Of the total deaths, 74% were of persons over the age of 65 years, and 72% of this group were over 75 years at death. Diseases of the heart and circulation, by far the greatest grouping to appear on death certificates, accounted for 40% of the total mortality, and only one death resulted from that disease on which so much newsprint has recently centred, carcinoma of the lungs. In the past five years there were 15 deaths, of whom 11 were males, from lung cancer out of 120 from all malignant causes.

It could be said that the infectious disease table provides pleasantly uninteresting reading except for a single shadow caused by the inclusion of a case of poliomyelitis, while the incidence of, and deaths from, tuberculosis continued the downward trend, with which the Council's post war housing programme and a safe milk supply must have had their satisfactory influence. It is gratifying to find the good name of the Borough fully restored after the temporary lapse the previous year, when the immunisation and vaccination returns showed an unusual decline. As the degree of attention given to active preventive measures is about the best criterion of child care, I had every confidence, from my ample opportunity of meeting local parents, that the excellent record of the Borough in the department of prophylaxis would not descend into the second rate.

Matters associated with environmental health were given as full a share of attention as time and staff permitted. The maintenance of the essential services was, of course, the first duty, as was attention to the day to day complaints of every type. In addition to the accustomed routine, each year lately has brought along its constant addition of new legislative measures which, however welcome, made comprehensive planning of the work of the department an utter impossibility for a sanitary inspector working single handed. This year, the particular emphasis concerned the arrangements for affecting the clearance of slum property and the preliminary work entailed by the new Food Hygiene Regulations, though the latter did not become operative until the succeeding year. The success of these two projects will depend on different circumstances, because the drive for clean food will owe its progress to the amount of planning and supervision of premises that can be given, whereas the speed of clearance of the moribund dwellings in the area will be governed by the zeal and determination with which the Council will tackle the matter, but the heroic start gave promise these would not be half hearted gestures. In association with the clearance programme, it is hoped, when additional help becomes available, to resume the house inspection routine, as an aid to saving certain types of property from falling into pre-

mature decay, and thus to reduce the future burden of house demolitions.

It is a pleasure to record my gratitude to the sanitary inspector, surveyor, and the clerk of the Council, among the officials on whom one could always rely for valued help and friendly co-operation. To Mr. Brocklebank, whose service the Council was fortunate in obtaining as successor to Mr. Dowson, who retired during the year, I was as indebted as I was to his predecessor for reducing my share of work in the environmental side to negligible proportions. The extent and variety of his duties can be seen, at least in part, in the body of this report.

I gratefully acknowledge also the full measure of assistance which was at all times graciously accorded by the Chairmen and members of the Committees with which my duties were concerned.

W. J. KERRIGAN,
Medical Officer of Health.

Louth; September, 1956

BOROUGH OF LOUTH

Public Health Officers :

Medical Officer of Health :

W. J. KERRIGAN, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., L.M., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspectors and Milk and Dairies Inspectors :

M. DOWSON (Resigned July, 1955)

J. A. H. BROCKLEBANK, M.I.S.A., M.R., San.I.

(Appointed February, 1955)

Surveyor :

J. C. BARBER, A.M., Inst.M.&CyE.

Meat Inspector :

J. W. BEAUMONT, M.R.C.V.S.

SECTION A

Social Conditions and General Statistics.

Area of Borough in Acres	...	...	2,812
Registrar General's estimated mid year Home Population	11,410		
Density per acre	...	...	4.06
Number of Inhabited Houses at the end of 1955	...		3,788
Rateable Value of Inhabited Houses	...	...	£40,638
Estimated product of Penny Rate	...	...	£248

VITAL STATISTICS

(Note—Figures in brackets show corresponding rates for England and Wales).

Births

(a)	LIVE		Total	Male	Female
	Legitimate	...	173	81	92
	Illegitimate	...	18	9	9
			191	90	101

(b) STILL			
Legitimate	9	3	6
Illegitimate	1	—	1
	<u>10</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>
Actual live birth rate per 1,000 of estimated population			16.7
Standardised birth rate for comparative purposes			
(Comparability factor 1.04)		17.4	(15.0)
Still birth rate per 1,000 of estimated population		0.88	(0.35)
Still birth rate per 1,000 of live and still births		49.8	(23.2)

Deaths	Total	Male	Female
	144	78	66
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 estimated population			12.62
Standardised death rate for comparative purposes			
(Comparability factor 0.78)		9.84	(11.7)
Deaths from maternal causes		NIL	
Deaths from Infectious Diseases		1	
Deaths of Infants under 12 months old :			

(a)	Cases	Male	Female
Legitimate	3	3	—
Illegitimate	1	1	—

(b) Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks old :

	Cases	Male	Female
Legitimate	3	3	—
Illegitimate	1	1	—

Causes of Infants deaths :

Prematurity	5 hours
Asthenia and Congenital abnormalities	4 days
Atelectasis	4 days
Atelectasis and Prematurity	30 minutes

Death Rate of Infants per 1,000 related live births 20.9 (24.9)

Ages at Death.

Ages in Years	0/1	1/5	5/15	15/25	25/35	35/45	45/55	55/65	65/75	75/85	85+	Total
Deaths	4	1	1	—	1	7	13	10	30	55	22	=144

Deaths from Malignant Neoplasms.

Ages in Years	Under 40	40/45	45/50	50/55	55/60	60/65	65/70	70/75	75+	Total
Cases	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	1	12	=26

Anatomical Sites of Malignant Neoplasms

	Male	Female
Stomach	4	2
Lung, bronchus	1	—
Breast	—	1
Uterus	—	1
Other sites	10	7
	15	11

Causes of Death

	Males	Females
1. Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	2	—
2. Tuberculosis—other ...	—	—
3. Other Infective and parasitic diseases	1	—
4. Malignant neoplasm—Stomach ...	4	2
5. Malignant neoplasm—Lung, Bronchus	1	—
6. Malignant neoplasm—Breast ...	—	1
7. Malignant neoplasm—Uterus	—	1
8. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	10	7
9. Leukaemia—aleukaemia ...	1	—
10. Vascular Lesions of nervous system	7	7
11. Coronary disease, angina ...	8	6
12. Hypertension with heart disease	1	3
13. Other heart disease ...	8	9
14. Other circulatory disease ...	3	4
15. Influenza ...	1	—
16. Pneumonia ...	5	3
17. Bronchitis ...	—	3
18. Other diseases of respiratory system	1	—
19. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	—
20. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	—	3
21. Nephritis and nephrosis ...	—	1
22. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion ...	—	—
23. Congenital malformations ...	1	—
24. Other defined and ill defined diseases	21	13
25. Motor vehicle accidents ...	—	1
26. All other accidents ...	1	2
27. Suicide ...	1	—
	78	66

SECTION B

General Provisions of Health Services of the Area Laboratory Facilities.

The Public Health Laboratory, Lincoln, in the charge of Dr. J. M. Croll, afforded the accustomed free and excellent service for the examination of all samples and specimens required by the Council, excepting two samples of water and sewage effluent submitted for chemical analysis on fee basis to a public analyst. During the year, the Public Health Laboratory dealt with 230 samples and specimens sent by us, concerned with the examination of water, milk, ice cream and infectious disease investigations, and it is a pleasure to record the invaluable help which has been forthcoming from this convenient service.

Treatment Centres and Clinics.

The variety and extent of the services provided by the County Council and the Regional Hospital Board can be seen from the details below, though these were concerned mainly with the treatment rather than the preventive aspects of medicine. Borough residents are extremely fortunate in having at their doorstep the wealth of diagnostic and treatment facilities made available at the local hospitals. The preventive services, which function along advisory and educational lines, do not attract so large a following to-day as existed previous to the expansion of other fields of the medical services, but it is gratifying to note there has been little falling off in the attendances at the local Welfare Centre. Some 1,700 children, under 5 years old, attended the Clinic centre during the year, of whom the great majority were babies under one year.

During the year, the County Council was fortunate in being able to secure the services of a full time Dental officer to supervise the care of the teeth of school children in the district, thereby satisfying a long felt want. The Dental officer, whose main treatment centre is at the local clinic, commenced duties in the second half of the year.

The following list give details of the services available.

A—At the County Council's premises, 32, Queen Street, Louth.

School Children.

Weekly Children: Wednesdays 2 to 4 p.m.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

- (1) Ante-Natal: Tuesdays (2nd & 4th) 10 to 12 noon.
- (2) Diphtheria Immunisation: Tuesdays (2nd & 4th 2 p.m.)
- (3) Child Welfare: Tuesdays (all) 2 to 4 p.m.
- (4) Toddlers: Monday (1st & 3rd) 10 a.m.

Rheumatic and Heart Clinic by appointment, and also are Diphtheria Immunisation (school children) and Ultra Violet Light Sessions.

**B—At County Infirmary,
Louth.**

Out Patient Clinics

Ophthalmology—Monday 10 a.m.
 Ear, Nose and Throat—Monday 2 p.m.
 Ante Natal—Monday 2-30 p.m.
 Psychiatry—Alt Tuesdays 10 a.m.
 Dental—Monday 4 p.m.
 Surgical—Tuesday 2-30 p.m. and
 Friday 2-30 p.m.
 Genito Urinary—Monday 11-30 a.m.
 Chest—Wednesday 9 a.m.
 Radiotherapy—Thursday 11 a.m.
 Gynæcology—Thursday 2 p.m.
 Venereology—Thursday 2 p.m.
 Medical—Thursday 10 a.m. and
 Friday 10 a.m.
 Orthopædic—Wednesday—(9-30 a.m. and
 Friday, 9-30 a.m.
 Dermatology—Friday 2 p.m.
 Pædiatic—Wednesday 2 p.m.
 School Eye Clinic—1st and 3rd Tuesday of
 each month 10 a.m.

**At Louth & District
Hospital**

Out Patient Clinics

—
 —
 —
 —
 —
 Monday 2-30 p.m. and
 Thursday 10-30 a.m.

**Prevalence of and Control over, Infectious and
other Diseases.**

**Infectious Diseases other than Tuberculosis notified during
1955**

Disease	Cases Notified	Case rates per 1,000 of estimated population	
Scarlet Fever	17	1.49	(0.73)
Measles	1	0.09	(15.61)
Pneumonia	1	0.09	(0.63)
Puerperal Pyrexia	5	+21.87	+(17.8)
Poliomelitis (Paralytic)	1	0.09	(0.08)
„ Non Paralytic	—	—	(0.06)
Total	25	+ per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births	

These are light lists by any form of assessment and, by check with the returns from the schools, were found to provide a true index of the incidence of infection, apart from the sporadic cases of chicken pox and mumps reported from the schools which are non-notifiable in this area.

Following the sharp outbreaks of whooping cough the previous year, it was not expected this disease would be much in evidence, and neither was a measles epidemic due. Scarlet Fever claimed the greatest number of victims, but it is now a mild and easily controlled infection which achieves notification prominence only when, as part of a specific tonsillitis, there is also a skin rash. The cases occurred mainly in an infant school during two periods of the year, and the spread was by direct contact.

All the cases of puerperal pyrexia were notified from the hospitals and concerned patients who came from outside areas. In a year associated nationally with many severe outbreaks of poliomyelitis, we were fortunate in having only a single case of the disease, though, unhappily, it was associated with paralysis.

One would be chary of regarding the absence of dysentery notifications as equivalent to a certificate of freedom from this type of infection in view of its widespread incidence throughout the country, but the victims seldom call on medical aid as the acute phase is usually short, and the spread continues through lack of the appropriate investigation.

Prophylaxis Measures against Diphtheria, Whooping Cough and Smallpox.

(a) Diphtheria Immunisation.

Under 5 Years	5-14 years	Booster Doses
46	20	158

(b) Whooping Cough Immunisations (under five years).

Under One	One	Two	Three	Four	Total
1	4	3	3	5	16

(c) Combined Diphtheria & Whooping Cough Immunisations (Under five years)

Under one	One	Two	Three	Four	Total
76	26	6	4	2	114

(d) Anti Smallpox.

Ages in years	0/1	1/4	5/14	15+	Total
(a) Primary Vaccinations	54	7	5	11	77
(b) Re-vaccinations	—	—	—	3	3

By setting out in comparative form the above information, kindly supplied by Dr. C. D. Cormac, County Medical Officer of Health, we can see the all-round improvement in the returns of the previous year, which appear in brackets.

Diphtheria Immunisations	under 5 years	160	(109)
Whooping Cough Vaccinations	„ „ „	130	(51)
Small Pox Vaccinations (primary)		77	(49)

Diphtheria.

In terms of the immunisation response for the year, the local prestige has been honourably restored to its accustomed pedestal. In the all important baby group, the number immunised represented 94% of the children born the previous year surviving to immunisation age, compared with 58% for 1954 by a similar calculation. The primary treatments done in the school age group, which ideally should be nil, remained about the same as other years, as were the booster numbers, though, in fact there were 29 of these additional to the number shown under this heading which were returned too late for acceptance in the year's lists

Not the least part of the merit of these results lies in the fact that the present day young parents can have little or no experience of diphtheria as a disease, and yet they show no relaxation of effort to have their children protected against it on medical advice. This connotes the intelligent understanding that the continuation of the existing freedom from the disease depends entirely on maintaining the level of immunisation.

We get reminders every year on account of the sporadic outbreaks of the disease, such as affected a neighbouring city during the year, that there is no room for complacency. In this instance, 17 cases, with one death, were recorded, and according to information, only one of the number had received the prescribed course of immunisation.

Whooping Cough.

Vaccination against this disease is in its comparative infancy, but as the efficacy of the vaccine becomes better recognised its popularity will increase as a means of averting, or considerably modifying, one of the most distressing and serious of present day childhood infections. It will be noticed that the majority of the treatments were given in combination with diphtheria antigen, thus reducing the number of injections from five to three for the dual protection. This combined form of treatment has much to commend it, provided it is given early, which in this case means giving the first of the three injections before the sixth month. The obvious reason for the early protection derives from the fact that the first year of life is the most dangerous period for a child to suffer from whooping cough, to which it is susceptible from the earliest months.

As this is only the third year since whooping cough vaccine was provided free, locally, for parents desiring to avail of it, the number of children vaccinated during the year supplies its own tribute to the good sense of the parents. No exhortations should.

be needed for the more general protection of children against this disease, because parents are, unfortunately, all too familiar with its effects on the child and the household.

Small Pox.

The only remarks which the year's treatments evoke is that they are an improvement on recent year. As mentioned in my report of last year, even if small pox, fortunately, makes rare appearances in this country, the risk remains, and there is the added consideration that vaccination is usually necessary for those entering the services and for those travelling abroad. It then becomes a more serious undertaking if the subject has never been vaccinated in childhood.

Tuberculosis: New Cases and Mortality during 1955

Age period (years)			New Cases				Deaths			
			Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
			M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0	...	...						
1	...	...						
5	...	...		2						
15	...	...	2	2						
25	...	...						
35	...	...						
45	...	...					1			
55	...	...						
65+	...	...					1			
Totals	...	...	2	4	—	—	2	—	—	—

Three of the new cases were of school age and two were in the Services, though there was no particular significance in this, apart from the fact that the notifications were all in respect of younger people, which is more unusual. One is glad to note the reduction in both the incidence of the disease and deaths resulting from it compared with the average of these in the preceding five years period, which gave the figures 9.6 and 3.4 respectively. This is also part of the national trend, which is expected on account of better living standards, improved housing conditions and the medical facilities for investigation and treatment now available. Of these three factors, perhaps the most important is housing, for tuberculosis has always had a notorious association with the slum and overcrowding, and when families were translated to better environment the fall in the incidence of the disease

quickly followed. In this way, the Council has contributed its important share by the extensive house building programme sponsored in the post-war years, and it will shortly have the opportunity of making an even greater contribution to healthier living by the urgency with which the clearance of slum properties will be carried out.

It is of interest to call attention to the absence, for the first time ever, of a notification of the non-pulmonary type of the disease from the local tuberculosis lists. Milk infected with tubercle germs is responsible for the majority of such cases, and it may be well that we are now at the stage of reaping the rewards of the prolonged drive and effort to make the local milk supply a safe commodity. This is further exemplified at school medical inspection, where it is now rare to find a child with the tuberculous type of gland infection which was formerly so much in evidence.

SECTION C.

Sanitary Circumstances in the area

Water Supplies.

Water Reports.

	Satisfactory		Doubtful	Unsatisfactory	Total
	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	
Public Supply. District Samples	102	—	4	2 =	108
Private Supply.	—	1	—	1 =	2
Totals	102	1	4	3 =	110

The supply caused no anxiety during the year after attention had been given to the removal of the seriously collapsed roof and sides of the reservoir, and although this meant leaving the reservoir temporarily uncovered it appeared the more satisfactory alternative. The question of protecting the supply by a suitable form of re-roofing was under consideration.

Investigation into the two unsatisfactory samples during the year pointed to the cause being due to a temporary defect in the chlorination system, by virtue of the negligible evidence of the free chlorine residual found at the time of sampling, both in the district and reservoir supplies. This immediately received attention, with subsequent favourable results. In addition to the samples taken from houses over the district, 25 other examinations were carried out in connexion with investigations, considered advisable from time to time, before the supply entered the mains.

No routine sampling was done in the case of the 17 houses dependent on their supplies from private sources. The pressure,

of other duties prevented even occasional checks being made on these, like so many other obligations which could only be met in part or not at all. We had, of course, in other years investigated all of these, and there was no reason to think that any circumstances had altered either the nature of the supplies or facilitated the connection of any of them to the public mains. Previous inquiries had established that all but two of the supplies were satisfactory.

The surveyor reported that the Raithby supply had been connected to the town's service reservoir via a 12" diameter main, to be in readiness for the Borough needs, as required, at a future date. Two borehole pumps were connected to the storage reservoirs at the site, as was also a booster pump to meet the requirements of the Louth Rural District Council from this source.

Consent had not been received from the Ministry to proceed with the proposed scheme of filtration, and without this treatment the water here is frequently so discoloured as to be unfit for use. The proposal also includes the necessary provisions for effecting the softening of the supply.

Swimming Baths.

The position here remained as in the previous year, except that alterations were carried out to improve the dressing accommodation, and a section was provided as a paddling pool for young children. The efforts to control the purity of the water in this section depended, as the need arose, on the addition by hand of a chlorine solution, though there was no mechanical means of effecting its circulation.

Drainage and Sewage

Closets.

As no conversions from the dry to water carriage system was done during the year, the number of dry closets remained at 16 privies and 33 pails. Some 27 pails were emptied weekly by the Council's service and a small number of privy vaults was also done as required.

Drains, etc.

The sanitary inspector, in the course of his report, stated that attention was given to some 60 complaints about drains and closets.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

The surveyor reported on these matters, as follows :-

“During the year, the survey of the existing sewerage system was completed and investigations made into conditions of surcharge, flooding, and the discharge of storm water. It is anticipated that a relief sewer will be necessary from Ramsgate to the eastern borough boundary, together with properly designed storm water overflows.

The main outfall sewer from the Riverhead area to the disposal works was thoroughly scraped and cleaned out. Trial holes were taken out on this outfall sewer which showed that the sewer had cracked badly and was generally unsound.

From the observations made during the year it appears that in addition to the relief sewer, a new outfall sewer will require to be laid from the eastern boundary to the disposal works, with extensive additions to the latter."

House Refuse.

The sanitary inspector stated that weekly collection was carried out as usual for practically all households, shops, schools, and institutions in the area. The system of disposal by controlled tipping at the London Road site provided no troubles during the year.

Reports on other miscellaneous work carried out :—

(a) Disinfection of rooms.

Formalin disinfection, formerly done in the case of certain infectious diseases in the household, is now seldom carried out except in unusual circumstances because of its very doubtful merit.

Where necessary, the bed and bedding occupied by the patient, are subjected to steam disinfection.

Disinfestation treatment was done to rid eight households of insect pests.

(b) Nuisances.

Details of the number abated during the year :—

Smoke	4
Accumulation of refuse	11
Foul ditches, ponds and stagnant water	3
Fowls, pigs and other animals	3
Dampness	4
Dangerous premises	6
Drainage	29
Other nuisances	30
Miscellaneous nuisances	5

All of these were abated as the result of informal action by the sanitary inspector.

(c) Premises engaged in offensive trades—rag and bone merchants—of which there are two in the district, were given the requisite supervision, as well as the knacker's yard, which was visited on 22 occasions.

(d) Rodent Control.

The Council employs one rodent operative who, during the year, was reported to have made systematic surveys and treatments of the sewers at six monthly intervals, besides similar investigations throughout the Borough area. In all, 126 business

premises and 15 dwelling houses were surveyed for rat infestation, and the treatments carried out resulted in an estimated kill of 750. The mouse population had a casualty list of a mere 60, which was understandable, because treatment was requested for only three premises.

If these figures are very low, it must be explained that no work was done during the first half of the year until the present operative was appointed to fill the vacant post, and even then, his employment in this work depended on the extent of the interruptions caused by having to "help out" in other forms of duty. Employment on this basis falls far short of the efforts expected from Local Authorities towards controlling these pests, which are known to be a potential means of spreading certain infectious diseases, mainly through the agency of food. A step in the right direction was recently made when the Council offered free treatment to houses for overcoming rat or mice infestations. Other more intensive efforts of control are required, particularly by more frequent inspections of food premises and slaughter houses for possible infestation, but the success of these matters can only result from the official being fully employed in his proper capacity.

(e) Shops Act 1950.

The duties under this Act refer to the provisions made in retail shops for sanitary accommodation, heating, lighting and ventilation. In the process of supervision 21 visits were paid to shops.

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

I. Inspections.

For purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspector).

Premises	No. on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Prosecutions
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6, are to be enforced by Local Authorities	11	17	Nil	Nil
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	103	121	4	Nil
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Totals	114	138	4	Nil

2. Defects found.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found			
	Found	Remedied	Referred	
			To HM Inspector	By HM Inspector
Sanitary Conveniences :-				
(a) Insufficient	2	—	—	2
(b) Unsuitable or defective	2	1	—	2
Total	4	1	—	4

3. Outwork.

Nature of work	No. of outworkers from returns submitted	Contraventions
Making wearing apparel	29	Nil
Totals	29	Nil

SECTION D.

Housing.

Total number of new houses erected during the year. 75

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| (1) By the Local Authority | ... | ... | 54 |
| (2) By other Local Authorities | ... | ... | Nil |
| (3) By other bodies or persons | ... | ... | 21 |

(1) Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year.

- | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| (1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) | ... | ... | 173 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | .. | .. | 502 |

(2) Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	...	17
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(3) Action under Statutory Powers during the year.

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|---|-----|-----|
| (a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 36 of the Housing Act, 1936 | | Nil |
| (1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs | ... | Nil |

(2) Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—			
(a)	By owners	... ..	Nil
(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners	... ..	Nil
(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—			
(1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	... ..	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—		
(a)	By Owners	... ..	Nil
(b)	By Local Authority in default of Owners	... ..	Nil
(c) Proceeding under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—			
(1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	...	8
(2)	Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	8
(3)	Number of dwelling houses subject to Undertakings or Closing Orders	...	1
(d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936			
(1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	... ..	Nil
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or rooms having been rendered fit	...	Nil
(e) Proceedings under Sections 25 and 26			
(1)	Number of Clearance Orders made	...	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance thereof.	... ..	Nil
(4) Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding.			
(a)	(1) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	... ..	1
	(2) Number of persons concerned in such cases	... ..	3

(b)	(1)	Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	...	...	4
	(2)	Number of families dwelling therein	...	...	4
	(3)	Number of persons dwelling therein	...	...	27

(5) Housing Act, 1949.

(a)	Number of applications for grants received	...	...	14
(b)	Number of grants made	...	...	4
(c)	Number of applications for grants made by Local Authority	...	...	Nil

(6) Movable Dwellings, Tents, Caravans, etc.

(a)	Number of Site Licences	...	...	Nil
(b)	Number of individual Licences	...	..	8
(c)	Total number of caravans permitted under licences	...	...	8
(d)	Number of inspections during the year :—			
	(1) Sites	...	...	Nil
	(2) Dwellings	...	...	28
(e)	Number of contraventions remedied	...	...	Nil

Housing.

Matter under this head came prominently under review by reason of the national drive directed towards slum clearance, which required the Council to submit a return to the Ministry of the estimated total number of unfit dwellings in the Borough, together with a statement of the period considered necessary for securing their demolition, and the action proposed in the first five years. The estimated number of unfit houses in the area was given as 150, plus some 30 single dwellings which would be dealt with otherwise than by clearance procedure, and the Council proposed to clear the properties at the average of 18 per year.

More than half the houses comprised in the unfit total would probably have been inclusions a quarter of a century ago, had similar information been then required, and their elimination is as highly desirable from the aesthetic angle as it has been an overdue necessity for the health and welfare of the unfortunate occupants. It was a heartening omen that the Council, at the year's end, had accepted and declared six areas, comprising 46 houses, for clearance, and now with the Ministry assurance that the administrative procedure will be simplified and quickened, the speed of the actual demolition of the properties will be determined by the pace of the building programme.

One drawback about these areas chosen for clearance is that few will lend themselves to redevelopment for housing needs,

which suggests that this should be the primary consideration in cases where the possibility exists. Such recommendation emerges from the fact that the clearance will largely affect houses occupied by elderly folk living alone or in couples, for whom the uprooting process will be a less serious upset if they can continue to enjoy the convenience of life near the town centre without the physical strain of long walks or climbing hills to new abodes at the periphery.

Looking at the results of house inspection during the year we may notice that only 17 dwellings were treated comprehensively and rendered fit in all respects, while minor repairs were carried out to a limited number of other tenanted properties. This unsatisfactory situation arose because attention to defects depended almost entirely on complaints from tenant occupiers, since time could not be found to carry out the routine house to house inspections, with the service of repair notices where necessary, which provide the one hope of preventing certain types of tenanted properties from falling into hopeless disrepair. It is noticeable, owing to the way this type of inspection has been crowded into the background in recent years, that landlords of lower category properties, perhaps understandably, show little interest in keeping their rented property in a reasonable state of repair, while the tenants are aroused to make complaints only when conditions become intolerable. It is significant also that not one of the 25 applications for Improvement Grants was made in respect of a rented house, nor was a single certificate of disrepair sought. All this points to the advisability of intensifying house inspection efforts and employing the powers conferred under the appropriate Public Health and Housing Sections to apply the stitch in time, with the hope of prolonging the life of much property that would otherwise prematurely deteriorate and increase the volume of demolition commitments. Obviously, this could not be done within the present staffing arrangements, but any necessary augmentation will probably justify itself in the long run, even from the accountancy consideration.

At the end of the year there were 188 applicants on the Council's waiting list, including 24 living in lodgings, and others in groups whose priorities varied with the individual circumstances, and one hopes that the claims of the younger generation will not be unduly neglected during this period, when the overriding demands of clearing slums require to be met.

SECTION E.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

The number of food premises in the district is as follows:—

Hotels	...	6
Restaurants	...	6
Snack Bars	..	7

Butchers, Pork Butchers ...	24	
Fried Fish Shops ...	4	
Wet Fish Shops ...	4	
Bakers ...	13	
Grocers & Confectioners ...	48	
Milk Dealers ...	32	
Ice Cream ...	49	including one manufacturer
Dairies ...	1	
Jam & Preserve manufacturers	1	

Premises registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

Jam and Preserve manufacturers	1
Ice Cream premises	49
Dairies	1
Manufacture or preparation of sausages or potted, pressed, pickled or preserved food	28

The following is a summary of work carried out in compliance with recommendations:—

1. Cleansing and redecoration	6
2. Repairs to walls, woodwork etc.	4
3. New wash up sink in hotel kitchen	1
4. Hot water supply provided over bakehouse sink	1
5. Hot water supply provided in snack bar	1
6. Wash hand basin & hot water supply to grocers shop	1
7. Cutting up table in meat preparation room renewed	1

As much supervision was given to this most important feature of Council duties as time could be allocated, but circumstances prevented this being as adequate as one would have wished. The sanitary inspector made some 400 visits to food premises, but the value of these is directly related to the time that can be devoted to explanatory and educational talks on the subject of food hygiene, when faulty methods are found during the course of visits. Unfortunately, of necessity, the visits consisted mainly of a quick look round to note and call attention to irregularities, which, as the inspector remarked, provided a form of service that, more or less, fulfilled obligations without achieving the fullest results.

In the past, there has been rather a lack of uniformity between one Authority and another about the degree of insistence on ways and means to raise the level of food hygiene, due in part to the want of clear cut legislative measures to assist the effort, but with the issue, towards the end of the year, of the Food Hygiene Regulations, which have been drawn up in unusually clear and comprehensive terms, authorities over the country are hopeful of being able to wage a more successful war against the present alarming incidence of food poisoning. Regulations by themselves,

may achieve little unless backed by the earnest co-operation of the trade, and supplemented by the energetic and helpful supervision on the part of the sanitary inspector, though there still remains the important contribution which the housewife can make by voicing her protest when the occasion requires. The Council cannot post a sanitary inspector every day on every food premises, but the housewives can, in fact, exercise a continuous alert if they act on their own, or report complaints to us in the face of careless or unclean methods of food handling.

The new Regulations were not due to become effective until 1956 but in view of their early operation, the usual type of supervision gave place to a preparatory general survey of food establishments to obtain information on which to base future appropriate action under the wider scope of the new legislative aids. The majority of the sanitary inspector's visits, already referred to, were made with this object in the second half of the year, and this was also responsible for the relatively small amount of work shown as having received attention during the year.

Meat.

Six private slaughter houses were licenced when the additions and provisions recommended were satisfactorily carried out.

Mr. J. W. Beaumont, M.R.C.V.S., the Council's Meat Inspector, gave the following report on carcasses inspected and condemned during the year :-

Carcasses Inspected and Condemned.

	Cattle excl'ding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (if known)	1734	80	40	4590	3860
Number inspected	1736	80	40	4603	3879
(a) All diseases except Tuberculosis					
Whole carcasses condemned	3	3	4	50	12
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	23	2	Nil	26	21
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	1.49	6.25	10.0	1.65	.85
(b) Tuberculosis only					
Whole carcasses condemned	11	7	—	—	4
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	7	3	—	—	31
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	1.03	12.5	Nil	Nil	.9

Food Condemned.

The following food was condemned as being unfit for human consumption and suitably disposed of :-

Chocolate	78lbs.		
Fruit	57	tins (Approx. 64 lbs)	
Milk	14	„ „	11 pints
Meat	24	„ „	97 lbs.
Vegetables	98	„ „	320 „
Soup	165	„ „	165 „
Jam	2	jars	
Cereals			16 „

Milk.

The supply retailed by roundsmen was either pasteurised or tuberculin tested non-heated treated, while licences were granted to 31 shops and depots for the sale of sterilised milk, and to 14 for the sale of pasteurised.

It will thus be seen that the total supply retailed in the Borough was in the safe category of being tuberculin free and was subject to the highest form of hygienic control. Needless to state, this welcome change did not evolve as a natural process, but was the result of persistent efforts, dating from the post-war period, gradually to improve the dangerously chaotic position then existing in this local service, and raise it to the present level. One is glad to mention the great measure of co-operation and encouragement given by the Council to our efforts, as well as the valuable assistance rendered by the County Council.

The following milk samples were taken during the year :-

Pasteurised and Heat Treated	34
Tuberculin Tested	3

To check if the pasteurised supplies had been properly processed, 34 samples were examined and were reported satisfactory, as were the 3 of raw T.T. milk. ~~Examined~~ Examined regarding the hygiene of handling and production.

Under the County Council scheme 9 samples were sent for biological tests, all of which were reported negative for tubercle, but two of them gave evidence of Brucella Abortus infection, which called for the appropriate investigation and remedy.

Ice Cream.

One premises was licensed for the manufacture of ice cream and 47 premises for sale only. The supplies from outside firms were pre-packed, and the sanitary inspector reported, as the result of 23 visits paid about the manufacture and sale, that no grounds for complaints were found.

All the samples, consisting of one from the local manufacturer and 21 from shops supplied by outside sources, were graded 1, which gave reasonable grounds for thinking that all was well in this trade.

